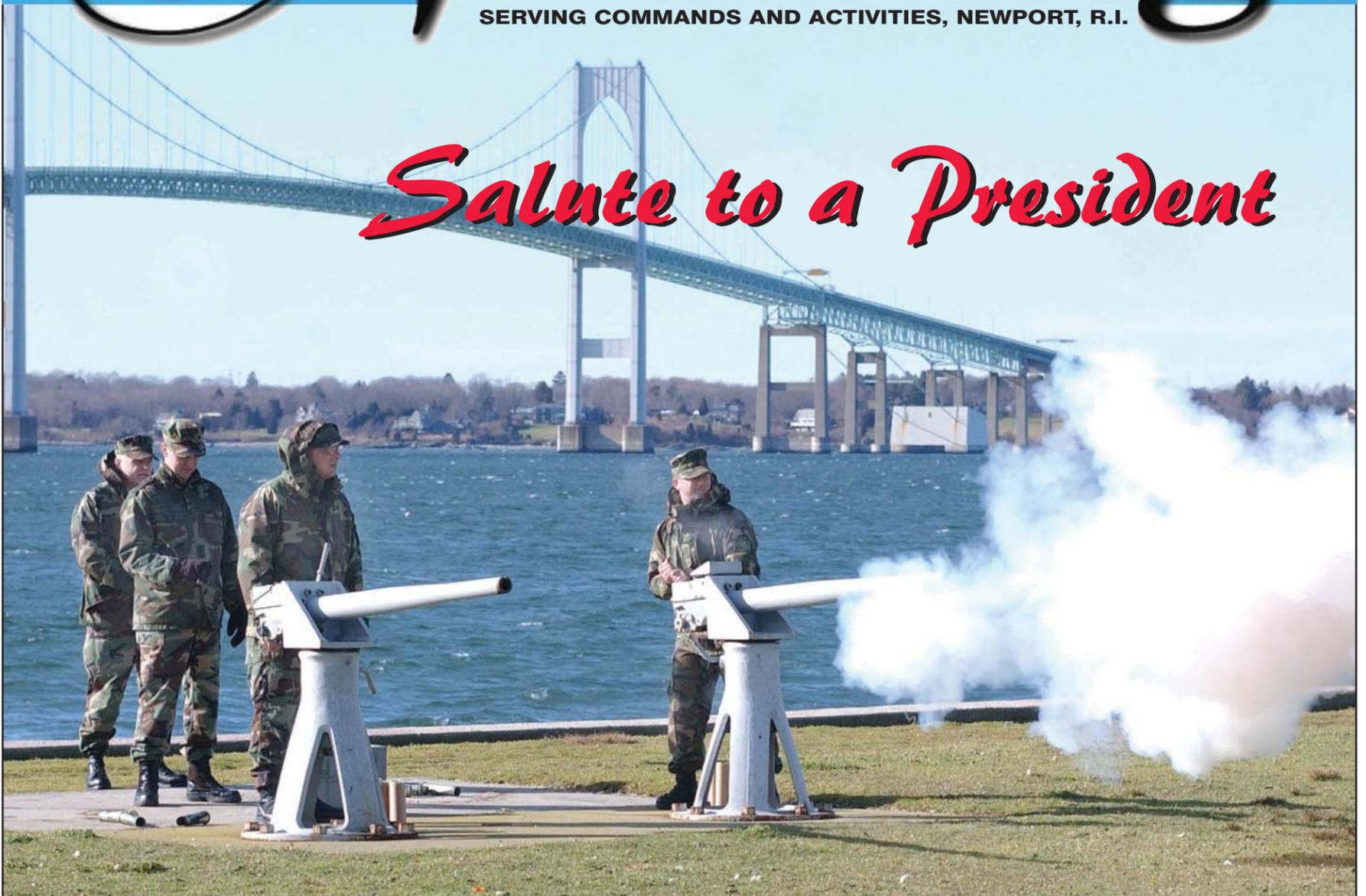


The Newport Navallog

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SERVING COMMANDS AND ACTIVITIES, NEWPORT, R.I.

Salute to a President



Ron Fontaine/U.S. Navy photo

TRIBUTE TO 38TH COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF — Naval Station Newport Security fires a 21-round salute from the battery at Dewey Field in honor of former President Gerald R. Ford who died on Dec. 26. Funeral services for the 38th president were held Tuesday, a National Day of Mourning, at Washington National Cathedral. From left are MAC Stacey Miracle, MA2 Steve Hanks, GM1 Chris Tavares and GM2 Anthony Doura. Story, Page 3.



Scrapbooks given to NWC

A collection of 13 privately-owned World War II scrapbooks with photos are donated to the Naval War College Foundation.

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Cutter Juniper shedding light

The Coast Guard buoy tender Juniper, homeported in Newport, begins upgrading the lanterns on coastal Aids to Navigation.

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Region basks in warm spell

Unusual warm weather for winter has New England residents thinking spring must be just around the corner.

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PA3 Annie Berlin/U.S. Coast Guard photos

TENDING TO BUOYS — The deck crew of the Coast Guard cutter Juniper prepares for a long day of working buoys in the Sandy Hook Channel of New York last month. The Juniper is installing new LED lanterns on a scheduled number of buoys along the Northeast coast on their patrol.

Newport cutter upgrading lanterns on channel buoys

PA3 ANNIE BERLIN
USCG cutter Juniper PAO

Petty Officer 2nd Class Greg Shriver carefully steps up onto the chain, then onto the lower bars at the base of the buoy before hauling himself up to the top. Even though he is wearing a safety harness and has climbed buoys like this many times, he is still cautious when he climbs up to change out a lamp or repair a solar panel.

Shriver, who is an aids to navigation technician, is installing one of the first of many light emitting diode (LED) units that the Coast Guard is beginning to implement throughout the nation. Coast Guard program managers at headquarters say that by the year 2008, 50 percent of incandescent lights on buoys will be replaced with self contained LED lanterns.

The LEDs have many benefits both to the mariner and the crew responsible for maintaining the navigational aids.

The new LED lanterns are compact units installed on the tops of buoys strategically placed to create a safe channel for mariners. They are a much



COAST Guard Seaman Joseph Lopez services a buoy hauled on deck during a maintenance evolution aboard the Coast Guard cutter Juniper.

more efficient alternative to their aged counterpart which has a solar panel on top and a large battery in a compartment in the base of the buoy.

"One of the main advantages of the LED is that it is totally self contained," said Lt. Cmdr. Rick Wester, Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard cutter Juniper. The black-hulled cutter is a 225-foot buoy tender homeported in Newport.

Wester and the Juniper crew visited New York Harbor recently and replaced the old

buoy setup with LEDs. "This will allow us to weld shut battery pockets on buoys. With the current configuration, battery pockets can flood, extinguishing the light and requiring maintenance," he said.

Although the price of an LED is comparable to traditional incandescent lights, program managers believe that the reduction in required maintenance will save the Coast Guard money in the long run.

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Navy-wide news

BAH increases to 3.5 percent

WASHINGTON (NNS) — Servicemembers will receive an average 3.5 percent boost in their basic allowance for housing compensation benefit in 2007, Defense Department officials said Dec. 18.

The planned BAH increase started Jan. 1 works out to about \$300 million more than what was paid in 2006, officials said.

Officials said military housing allowances are computed according to three key criteria: median current market rent; average utilities, to include electricity, heat and water/sewer costs; and average renter's insurance.

BAH rates also are based on dwelling type and number of bedrooms in a given area and then calculated for each pay grade, both with and without family members.

For servicemembers with family members, average increases in the BAH are approximately \$44 per month. For example, a typical third class petty officer/corporal (E-4) will receive about \$34 more in BAH than in 2006, while a senior chief petty officer/master sergeant (E-8) will receive about \$42 more this year.

New uniforms due in summer 2008

WASHINGTON (NNS) — Task Force Uniform announced Dec. 14 that the fleet can expect to see two new uniforms appearing in Navy Exchanges by late Summer of 2008.

One of the two uniforms being rolled out in 2008 is a single Navy working uniform for wear by all Sailors E-1 to O-10, and a year round service uniform for all Sailors E-6 and below.

The uniforms will be sent to Navy Exchanges and Uniform Centers over a 24 month period. Fleet outfitting will take place in eight increments starting with fleet concentration areas. Recruit Training Command Great Lakes will start receiving the new uniforms in the beginning of FY09. Uniforms should be available to all regions within 24 months of the initial roll out, according to *NAVADMIN 351/06*.

The all ranks uniform is a BDU-style working uniform designed to replace seven different styles of current working uniforms. It is made of a near maintenance-free permanent press 50/50 nylon and cotton blend. Worn with a blue cotton t-shirt, it will include an eight-point cover, a black web belt with closed buckle, and smooth black leather boots. Black suede no-shine boots are available for optional wear when assigned to non-shipboard commands.

A single, year-round service uniform for Sailors E-6 and below is comprised of a short-sleeve khaki shirt for males and an overblouse for females. Both are made from a wash and wear 75/25 polyester and wool blend with permanent military creases. Black trousers will be worn by males, and beltless black slacks and optional beltless skirt are to be worn by females. Both will wear a black unisex garrison cap.

Four Sailors swept off sub, 2 die

LONDON (NNS) — Rough seas swept four American sailors from the deck of the nuclear submarine USS Minneapolis-St Paul (SSN 708) off the coast of southwestern England in rough seas on Dec. 29, killing two of them, authorities said.

Senior Chief Thomas E. Higgins, 45, of Paducah, Ky., and Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael J. Holtz, 30, of Lakewood, Ohio, died after falling overboard while the submarine was leaving the Devonport Naval Base in Plymouth, England.

The cause of the accident remains under investigation.

The four Sailors were tied to the vessel with ropes — a routine precaution — but were knocked into the water by surging waves. British police boats — small inflatable dinghies with outboard motors — picked up all four, said Baxter Provan, a spokesman for the Devon and Cornwall police.

Lt. Chris Servello, a spokesman for the U.S. 6th Fleet in Naples, Italy, said the four men were taken to a hospital in Plymouth, where Higgins and Holtz were pronounced dead. The two survivors were treated for minor injuries and discharged, he said. No one else was injured and all the other sailors have been accounted for.





Ford

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drill.

In addition, he coached in all nine sports that were offered, but mostly in swimming, boxing and football. He was promoted to lieutenant junior grade in June 1942, and to full lieutenant in March 1943, while assigned to the Preflight School.

In May 1943, Ford was sent to the pre-commissioning detachment for a new light aircraft carrier, USS Monterey (CVL-26) at New York Shipbuilding Corp., Camden, N.J. From the ship's commissioning on June 17, 1943, until the end of December 1944, Ford served as the assistant navigator, athletic officer, and anti-aircraft battery officer. Monterey participated in many actions in the Pacific with the 3rd and 5th Fleets during the fall of 1943 and in 1944.

Ford was detached from the ship on Christmas Eve 1944, and sent to the Athletic Department of the Navy Preflight School, St. Mary's College, Calif., where one of his duties was to coach football.

From the end of April 1945 to Jan. 1946, he was on the staff of the Naval Reserve Training Command at Naval Air Station, Glenview, Ill. as the staff physical and military training officer. He was promoted to Lt. Cmdr. Oct. 3, 1945.

The future president was released from active duty

under honorable conditions on Feb. 23, 1946. On 28 June 1963, the Secretary of the Navy accepted Ford's resignation from the Naval Reserve.

Ford earned the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with nine engagement stars for operations in the Gilbert Islands, Bismark Archipelego, Marshal Islands, Asiatic and Pacific carrier raids, Hollandia, Marianas, Western Carolines, Western New Guinea, and the Leyte Operation.

As part of the honors for the former president, the Washington Navy Yard fired a gun salute every half hour from 8 a.m. until sunset on Dec. 27.

History shows the former president's term in office began in the midst of scandal, but as President Bush noted in his statement, Ford brought honor back to the highest office in the land.

"He assumed power in a period of great division and turmoil," said Bush.

"For a nation that needed healing and for an office that needed a calm and steady hand, Gerald Ford came along when we needed him most.

"During his time in office," Bush continued, "the American people came to know President Ford as a man of complete integrity who led our country with common sense and kind instincts."

Juniper

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But cost saving isn't the main reason why those who work the buoys are so excited about the project. The new LEDs are not only a guiding light for ship's in the channel, but also a ray of sunshine for the Coast Guardsmen responsible for mounting the lantern atop the large buoy.

The old incandescent panel installation process was much more technical and complicated. Not an easy task when balancing close to 30 feet in the air atop a buoy.

"It's an awkward place to work, because you don't have much room," said Shriver. "You find yourself getting into all these little awkward positions. Most of the time you have to get two people up there, which can get tricky," said Shriver.

Although climbing to the top of a buoy will still provide its own obstacles, the new LED will be easier to install.

"With the LED, you take it out of the box, grab a remote, and you program it. It's just this little unique package that has everything right there in this little box," Shriver added.



PA3 Annie Berlin/USCG photo

Members of the deck crew of the Coast Guard cutter Juniper snag an Aids to Navigation buoy to hoist it aboard for servicing and maintenance in the Sandy Hook Channel of New York last month.

Winter

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downtown Newport and the Fleet Skating Center in Providence are open to the public.

"It's been a good mix of single Sailors and families coming in," he said.

Sales of snow shovels, scrapers, salt and sand, plus winter clothing is off at the Navy Exchange.

"In December, our sales for snow shovels, snowblowers and winter products was \$4,000 less than last December," said Barbara Bain-Martinez, visual merchandising manager. "At the same time, we're still selling lots of running suits and sneakers because it's still nice outdoors for a workout."

Newport's First Night celebration of New Year's Eve last Sunday drew record crowds to downtown for a variety of musical and entertainment venues, followed by fireworks over Newport Harbor. Normally bundled in heavy coats, scarves and gloves against the bitter wind off the harbor, rev-

elers enjoyed a still, clear night with temperatures in the low 40s.

The grass is still green and ground unfrozen, and some gardens still bear flowers in bloom. There is barely frost on the car windshields each morning.

The National Audubon Society said hummingbirds and butterflies have been spotted in some parts of Massachusetts, and some species of birds that fly south for the winter are sticking around because ponds and the ground aren't frozen, and food supplies are still available.

At Blithewold Mansion, Gardens and Arboretum in Bristol, three cherry trees are sporting pink buds, and at Green Animals Topiary Gardens in Portsmouth, about 2,000 panicles are in full bloom.

"During moderate, as well as strong El Niño episodes, an increase in the occurrence of extreme cold days, especially in the Northeast, becomes less

likely," said Vernon Kousky, research meteorologist at the Climate Prediction Center. "However, this current event is not expected to reach the magnitude of the very strong 1997-1998 El Niño episode," he added.

Overall, NOAA seasonal forecasters expect warmer than average temperatures across the Pacific Northwest, the northern and central plains, the Midwest, the Northeast and northern mid-Atlantic, as well as most of Alaska through February 2007.

"The prediction for a warmer than normal winter season does not mean we won't have winter weather," said Mike Halpert, lead seasonal forecaster at the NOAA Climate Prediction Center. "What it does mean is that on average this will be a milder than average winter across much of the North, with fewer arctic air outbreaks," he added.



Ron Fontaine/U.S. Navy photo

MAKING THE CUT — Daren J. Savadyga of All Island Landscape trims branches off a dead tree across from Quarters EYE last month before it is removed. Several diseased trees were removed along Lawrence Field on Dec. 15.

